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AUTHORITY
AGO ltr, 29 Apr 1980

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO

62928  
AD

AGDA (M) (19 Mar 70) FOR OT UT 694104 27 March 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 21st Signal Group, Period Ending 31 October 1969

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 4b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT UT, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.
2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

KENNETH G. WICKHAM  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General

1 Incl  
as

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ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF FOR FORCE DEVELOPMENT  
(ARMY) ATTN FOR OT UT. WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 21ST SIGNAL GROUP  
APO 96240

SCCPV-NG

15 November 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 21st  
Signal Group (USASTRATCOM) for period ending 31 October 1969,  
RCS CS FOR-65 (R2)

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Section 1, Operations: Significant Activities.

a. Mission. During the period of this report, there were no changes in the 21st Signal Group's mission or geographical area of responsibility from that noted in the previous report covering the period ending 31 July 1969.

b. General. Throughout the 92 day reporting period the 21st Signal Group, under the command and operational control of CG, 1st Signal Brigade, provided communication support to FWMAF located throughout the II CTZ, Republic of Vietnam.

c. Activities.

(1) Principal Staff and Command Changes:

(a) LTC Elmer L. Routh assumed command of the II CTZ Signal Battalion (Provisional) upon activation of the battalion by 1st Signal Brigade order effective 1 October 1969.

(b) LTC James G. Tice assumed duties of Deputy Commanding Officer, 21st Signal Group, on 16 August 1969.

(c) LTC James N. Chapman assumed duties of Deputy Commanding Officer, 21st Signal Group, on 16 October 1969 upon the departure of LTC James G. Tice.

(d) LTC Roger K. Davis assumed command of the 459th Signal Battalion on 16 October 1969, upon the reassignment of LTC James N. Chapman.

(e) LTC Humphrey J. Martin assumed command of the 43d Signal Battalion on 3 August 1969, upon the reassignment of LTC James G. Tice.

(f) CPT James L. Walker assumed duties as Group Adjutant on 6 August 1969, upon the reassignment of MAJ Robert W. Welker.

Inclosure

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(2) Distinguished Visitors:

(a) MG Hugh Foster, Commanding General, USASTRATCOM-PAC, visited  
73d Signal Battalion facilities at Dalat and Cam Ranh Bay on 19 September 1969.

(b) BG Geoffrey Cheadle, MACV J-6, visited Nha Trang on 24 October  
1969, accompanied by Col Thomas C. Musgrave, Commanding Officer, 21st  
Signal Group.

(3) Unit Citations: Presentation of the Meritorious Unit Citation  
was made to the following battalions of the 21st Signal Group:

41st Signal Battalion on 14 October 1969  
73d Signal Battalion on 19 September 1969  
459th Signal Battalion on 16 October 1969

d. Personnel and Administration:

(1) At the beginning of this reporting period, the 21st Signal Group  
had 4,026 personnel assigned (O-205; WO-52; EM-3,769), or 88.3% of its  
authorized strength of 4,559. At the end of the reporting period the  
assigned strength was 4,160 (O-192; WO-50; EM-3,918), or 91.2% of  
authorized strength.

(2) The trend established during the closing weeks of the previous  
reporting period continued during the first two months of this reporting  
period with a resulting increase in the Group's strength. During the  
latter part of this period the rate of fill failed to provide replace-  
ments for all of the Group's losses and strength was again reduced.  
Critical shortages in MOS's 31M, 36C, 36E, and 72C continued to hamper  
operations to a degree, while increased fill in MOS 72B has substantially  
corrected shortages in that area. Fifty-six new MTOE/TDA documents covering  
all units within the Group were returned to 21st Signal Group, as approved  
by USASTRATCOM and forwarded to DA for final approval. These documents  
realign the structure of the Group in consonance with the then current  
mission assignments. These documents will provide a more realistic  
authorization of personnel and allow better utilization of manpower.

(3) During the reporting period this command awarded 3 Legion of  
Merit Medals, 8 Air Medals, 142 Bronze Star Medals, 286 Army Commendation  
Medals, 93 21st Signal Group Certificates of Achievement, and 7 1st Signal  
Brigade Certificates of Achievement. In addition, 14 persons in the  
command received the Distinctive Insignia of the Signal Corps - Republic  
of Vietnam Armed Forces. Col Musgrave was awarded the Technical Service  
Honor Medal - RVNAF on 15 October 1969 by LTC Chau, CO, 66th Area Signal  
Group (ARVN).

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(4) In the past three months, 1,115 home town news releases were released by the public information office, and 37 interviews were taped and distributed to home town radio stations. Civic action programs by 21st Group units continued. Of particular interest were the assistance given to the people of the Plei Ho Bi village by the 43d Signal Battalion in strengthening the village's defense plan, and assistance given by the 459th Signal Battalion to the Franciscan Brothers Orphanage in Nha Trang.

e. Operations.

(1) Communication Centers. Two new communication centers were activated during the reporting period. On 9 August a 60 WPM full duplex pony circuit was activated from the Phu Hiep Army Comm Center to the MACV compound at Tuy Hoa. The purpose of the circuit was to speed the delivery of traffic to MACV Tuy Hoa. The second circuit was a secure teletype circuit to Ba Ngoi for use of the Province Senior Advisor.

(2) Radio.

(a) Four systems were activated and nine systems deactivated during the reporting period. Two test shots, a VHF (AN/TRC-24) system from Phan Thiet to Ham Tan, and a microwave (AN/TRC-29) system from Phan Rang to Cam Ranh Bay, were activated and deactivated during the period.

(b) A relay station was installed at Pleiku North to upgrade the system between Dragon Mountain and An Khe.

(3) Telephone.

(a) The Phu Tai Dial Telephone Exchange was activated on 4 October 1969, eliminating two combined AN/TTC-7 manual exchanges.

(b) On 29 October 1969, the Vung Chua Mountain Tandem Switch was activated, providing long distance direct dialing capabilities to the Qui Nhon, Phu Tai, Phu Cat, and Tuy Hoa areas.

f. Training.

(1) During the reporting period, 239 persons attended formal training courses conducted by the 1st Signal Brigade's US Army Training Facility, 21st Signal Group, and other commands. In addition to courses in 24 separate areas of communication equipment operation and maintenance, personnel attended classes for motor officers, personnel clerks, PLL clerks and in jungle survival. To alleviate problems caused by personnel shortages in the MOS's 31M, 36C and 72C, 91 individuals were cross-trained into those fields.

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(2) In September, 23 ARVN soldiers completed the AN/TRC-29 (microwave) operator course conducted by the 518th Signal Company and were placed at 21st Signal Group sites for a three month period of "on-the-job" training.

g. Intelligence.

(1) There was a decrease in enemy activity during the reporting period, becoming most evident during the months of September and October. There were forty-three reports of enemy activity during the period, down from seventy-four for the previous three months. The heaviest activity occurred during August when five attacks by fire caused casualties to 21st Signal Group personnel. During a mortar attack on Camp Mc Dermott on the night of 7 August, the 459th Signal Battalion suffered eighteen casualties, including one KIA. Equipment damage was minimal.

(2) Fifty-seven physical security inspections were conducted by Group and Battalion Staffs during the reporting period, as well as six communications security sweeps and seven counter-intelligence inspections. The overall state of physical and communications security throughout the 21st Group was excellent; and further efforts are being made to improve the defensive posture of all signal sites in the 21st Signal Group area.

h. Logistics.

(1) During this reporting period, the 21st Signal Group CMMI team conducted five inspections. These inspections included four annual inspections and one re-inspection. The ratings were as follows:

- (a) Annual inspections 3 satisfactory.
- (b) Annual inspections 1 unsatisfactory.
- (c) Re-inspections 1 satisfactory.

All subordinate units of this command have received CMMI inspections within the past 10 months.

(2) During the week of 14 through 19 September, the CMMI team conducted a second training course for eleven Motor Officers from the subordinate battalions of 21st Signal Group. The instruction encompassed PLL, TAERS, shop procedures, shop facilities, work flow, motor stables, SOP's, care and use of hand tools, safety, and generator and air conditioner operation and maintenance. This course has resulted in an improved motor vehicle maintenance program throughout 21st Signal Group.

(3) During this period, nineteen Quarterly Reviews of Field Ration Mess accounts were conducted by the 21st Signal Group Food Service Advisor IAW AR 30-41. Emphasis was given to insuring cash meal payment book DD Form 1544 receipts were on file for the previous year. Loss of books

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either at the control officer level or in the unit required investigation under the provisions of AR 15-6. Retention of receipts and proper filing procedures would preclude investigations at unit level. Twelve mess halls were inspected for the monthly Best Mess Award with ratings ranging from 87% to 98%. Messes were rated by the food advisor in the following categories: administration; dining area; kitchen and kitchen equipment; food preparation and serving; storage and control; outside area.

(4) Logistics Section conducted site surveys on all sites of three battalions for the purpose of examining the extent of devianization, monitoring the progress of revanization and evaluating adequacy of excess of back-up and spare equipment. These surveys are programmed for completion during the month of November.

(5) The 21st Signal Group Materiel Assistance Team continued to be active throughout this reporting period. The team's mission is to teach and advise personnel at battalion, company, and site level in the areas of supply and maintenance of signal, engineer and automotive equipment.

#### 1. Organization.

(1) There was no change in the 21st Signal Group's geographical area of operations, the II CTZ, or its operational mission during the reporting period. Inclosure 1 shows the II CTZ and battalion areas of responsibility as of 31 October 1969.

(2) The organization structure of the 21st Group was changed as a result of formation of a provisional battalion. Inclosures 2 and 3 depict the 21st Signal Group organization as of 31 July and 31 October. Inclosure 4 depicts the organization when the reorganization is completed, on or about 1 December 1969.

#### (3) Orders.

(a) USASTRATCOM General Order 125, dated 30 June 1969, organized the Vung Chua Support Detachment and assigned it to the 41st Signal Battalion. Promotion and MOS requisition problems caused by operating this fixed facility with personnel authorized by a tactical MTOE will be alleviated by the new TDA.

(b) The 206th and 224th Signal Detachments were activated by USASTRATCOM General Order 135, dated 1 July 1969. The detachments, each composed of a 25-man team and an AN/MTC-9, were assigned to the 459th Signal Battalion. One team is providing switchboard service for subscribers in the Nha Trang area, while the other is serving in a contingency capacity. The creation of distinct AN/MTC-9 teams allows transfer of this equipment and personnel to other battalions without a major TOE change.

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(c) 1st Signal Brigade General Order 4552, effective 1 October 1969, organized the II CTZ Signal Battalion (Provisional). This battalion was formed to solve logistical and control problems unique to units with a mission extending throughout the II CTZ. The 578th Signal Company (Cable Construction) headquarters was moved on 15 August 1969 from Phu Tai and co-located with battalion headquarters at Cam Ranh Bay. Effective 1 October 1969, 1st Signal Brigade General Order 4553 attached the 578th Signal Company to the II CTZ Signal Battalion (Provisional). The 362d (Troposcatter) and 518th (Microwave) Signal Company headquarters will be moved to Cam Ranh Bay and similarly attached during the next quarter.

j. Aviation.

(1) The 21st Signal Group Aviation Section began supporting the II CTZ Signal Battalion (Provisional) during the reporting period, allocating one day per week to the battalion for aviation support.

(2) Two helicopters were replaced; one because of major damage resulting from an engine failure, and the other because of deterioration through normal use. Both aircraft were replaced with UH-1H helicopters, maintaining a balance of seven UH-1H and one UH-1D aircraft in the section.

(3) One pilot attended Jungle Survival School in the Philippines, and is now instructing aviation personnel in the section. The section NCOIC left during the period to attend Water Survival School, and will instruct section personnel.

(4) An additional helicopter revetment was built and two revetments improved for better aircraft protection. The bunker in the section area was rebuilt and the maintenance tent was extended in order to shelter an entire helicopter, allowing maintenance crews to work on all parts of the aircraft during inclement weather.

(5) For the reporting period, statistics were:

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>HRS FLOWN</u>	<u>MISSIONS</u>	<u>CARGO (Tons)</u>	<u>PAX</u>
AUG	575	1257	61	3262
SEP	551	1447	70	3317
OCT	516	1591	79	3535
TOTAL	1642	4795	210	10,114

Quarterly averages per aircraft were:

Operational Availability: 80.6%  
Hours Flown: 205



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2. Section 2, Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations,  
and Recommendations.

- a. Personnel. None
- b. Intelligence. None
- c. Operations.

(1) Testing of Cable Plants.

(a) Observation. Problems have developed with newly installed cable plants due to improper splicing techniques and sealing of splice cases.

(b) Evaluation. Cable plants should be more thoroughly tested when installed. This will provide an accurate measurement of the quality of installation and permit immediate correction of deficiencies.

(c) Recommendations. The battalion for which a cable plant is being installed should be closely involved in its construction. This will permit observation of installation techniques and also provide a means of establishing records of splices for the cable plant.

(2) Communication Center Activations.

(a) Observation. Installation of the two new communication center circuits mentioned in Section 1 was not recommended by this headquarters. The pony circuit to Tuy Hoa was supposed to provide faster service for the MACV Tuy Hoa personnel. The secure circuit to Ba Ngoi was installed because of the high volume of traffic for the Senior Advisor.

(b) Evaluation.

1. This headquarters recommended against installing the Tuy Hoa circuit because the problem was the frequency and speed with which subscribers in the Tuy Hoa area picked up messages. The speed of service to Tuy Hoa has not improved because subscribers are still not picking up messages. Average pick up time for terminated flash messages was 5 hours and 42 minutes for the period 8 September - 7 October. Prior to activation, the MACV team agreed to operate the pony circuit terminal equipment. However, this agreement was later negated by MACV.

2. At Ba Ngoi, the volume of traffic has proved to be extremely light, as anticipated in the initial evaluation by this headquarters. The Ba Ngoi Senior Advisor did not desire installation of the circuit.

(c) Recommendations.

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1. When a request is forwarded to USARV and 1st Signal Brigade from a subordinate command, more weight should be given to the evaluation and recommendations of the Group involved.

2. Both circuits should be deactivated. They do not provide significantly better service and constitute a drain on personnel and equipment of this Headquarters. With deactivation of these circuits, Tuy Hoa will not experience an increase in message processing time. Ba Ngoi can easily be serviced by the courier of the 73d Signal Battalion.

3. The experience with Tuy Hoa indicates a need for increased liaison visits with communication center customers. It also indicates need for support from USARV C&E in encouraging subordinate units to cooperate more fully with communication centers supporting them.

d. Organization. None

e. Training. None

f. Logistics.

Invalid Requisitions.

(1) Observation. It has been noted that proper follow-up actions are still not being taken on requisitions. On numerous occasions, units forward invalid MILSTRIP data for assistance in obtaining items that are not on valid requisitions at USAICCV.

(2) Evaluation. Units are not coordinating with their supporting activity on a frequent basis regarding the status of requisitions.

(3) Recommendations. Using units should coordinate with supporting activities in ascertaining the validity and status of requisitions of non-critical items on a monthly basis as a minimum, and more frequently on critically needed items.

g. Communications. None

h. Materiel.

Generator Failures.

(1) Observation. Some units employing the 45 KW, 400 HZ generator set in support of AN/TRC-97 Tropo Systems have experienced failures due to carbon build-up.

(2) Evaluation. In order for this diesel engine to properly heat

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RCS CS FOR-65 (R2)

and consume all of its fuel, the shutters must be kept closed while in operation. If they are left open during operation, carbon build-up occurs.

(3) Recommendation. That all users of this generator set be taught the importance of keeping the shutters closed during operation. Briefing replacement personnel is particularly important.

1. Aviation.

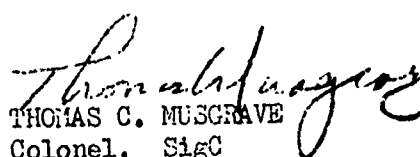
Test Flight Procedure.

(1) Observation. An engine failure during a helicopter test flight resulted in an accident involving seven persons. No one was injured.

(2) Evaluation. Test flights, by their nature, are more hazardous than most others. Although all persons on board the aircraft were performing duties, it was determined that the number on board could have been reduced and still accomplished the mission. In this case an unnecessary number of persons were exposed to the accident.

(3) Recommendation. Pilots making test flights should take on board the minimum number of personnel necessary to accomplish the mission.

4 Incl  
as

  
THOMAS C. MUSGRAVE  
Colonel, SigC  
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION:

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1 ea - CO, 43d Sig Bn  
1 ea - CO, 73d Sig Pn  
1 ea - CO, 459th Sig Bn  
1 ea - CO, II CTZ Sig Bn

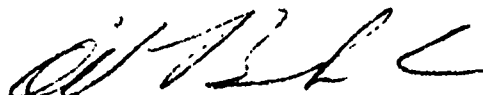
SCCPV-AD (15 Nov 69) 1st Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 21st  
Signal Group (USASTRATCOM) for Period Ending 31 October 1969,  
RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

DA, HQ, 1st Signal Brigade (USASTRATCOM), APO 96384 22 November 1969

TO: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHCG-DST,  
APO 96375

1. Subject report is forwarded in accordance with AR 525-15.
2. This headquarters has reviewed the report and concurs in it except para 2c(2), page 7:
  - a. 1st Sig Bde msg, DTG 090150Z Oct 69 to USARV, recommended that the Tuy Hoa PSA Comcenter be deactivated. As of the date of this indorsement no decision has been reached.
  - b. The Ba Ngoi PSA issued a letter to 21st Signal Group stating that he did not require nor desire secure teletype service. Actions were initiated to request a USARV review of the requirement in view of the PSA's position. Subsequently, the PSA's position was abruptly reversed as a result of a PSA/MACV meeting on the subject. The requirement, therefore, remains firm.
  - c. This headquarters continues to give full consideration to subordinate command recommendations on operational matters. In the cases cited, both recommendations from the 21st Signal Group were supported by this HQ.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



O. V. BONEBRAKE  
Major, AGC  
Acting AG

CF:  
Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the Army,  
Washington, D. C. 20310  
Commanding General, United States Army Strategic Communications Command  
ATTN: SCC-OPS-RT, Fort Huachuca, Arizona, 85613  
Commanding Officer, 21st Signal Group, APO 96240

AVHGC-DST (15 Nov 69) 2d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 21st Signal Group (USASTRATCOM) for Period Ending 31 October 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 5 [unclear]

THRU: Commanding General, United States Army Strategic Communications Command-Pacific, APO 96557

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT, APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 October 1969, from Headquarters, 21st Signal Group.

2. Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning "Communications Center Activations", section II, page 7, paragraph 2c(2) and 1st Indorsement, paragraph 2; concur. A message will be sent to MACV J-6 requesting deactivation of the Tuy Hoa PSA Comcenter and the Ba Ngoi Comcenter.

b. Reference item concerning "Generator Failures", section II, page 8, paragraph 2h; nonconcur. The shutters of the 45 KW generator are thermostatically controlled and should be held closed only during shipment. The side access panels must remain closed during operation. MECOM representative will take necessary action to advise 21st Signal Group of the proper procedure.

c. Reference item concerning "Test Flight Procedure", section II, page 9, paragraph 2i; concur. TB AVN 23-16 requires that only the minimum crew necessary to perform the test flight be on board the aircraft. The USARV Aviation Officer dispatched a letter to all aviation units, 17 Oct 69, re-emphasizing the importance of strict adherence to the provisions of TB AVN 23-16.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

  
B. J. BODWIN

Cy furn:  
21 Sig Gp  
1st Sig Bde

SCCP-OP3 (15 Nov 69) 3d Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 21st  
Signal Group (USASTRATCOM) for period ending 31 October 1969,  
RCS CS FOR-65 (R2)

Headquarters, U. S. Army Strategic Communications Command - Pacific,  
APO San Francisco 9655722 DEC 1969

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT,  
APO 96558

1. Subject report is forwarded in accordance with AR 525-15.
2. This headquarters has reviewed and concurs with subject report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

*Frank C. Mahin*  
FRANK C. MAHIN  
COL, GS  
Chief of Staff

CF: w/o Incl  
CG, USARV, APO 96375  
CG, 1st Sig Bde (USASTRATCOM), APO 96384  
CO, 21st Sig Gp (USASTRATCOM), APO 96240

GPOP-DT (15 Nov 69) 4th Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 21st Signal Group for Period Ending  
31 October 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 31 DEC 69

THRU: Commanding General, US Army Strategic Communications Command,  
Fort Huachuca, Arizona 85613

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



C. L. SHORTT  
CPT, AGC  
Asst AG

CF:  
DA, ACSFOR  
CG, USASTRATCOM-PAC

SCC-PO (15 Nov 69) 5th Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 21st Signal Group for Period Ending  
31 October 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

Headquarters, United States Army Strategic Communications Command, Fort  
Huachuca, Arizona 85613 1 2 NOV 1969

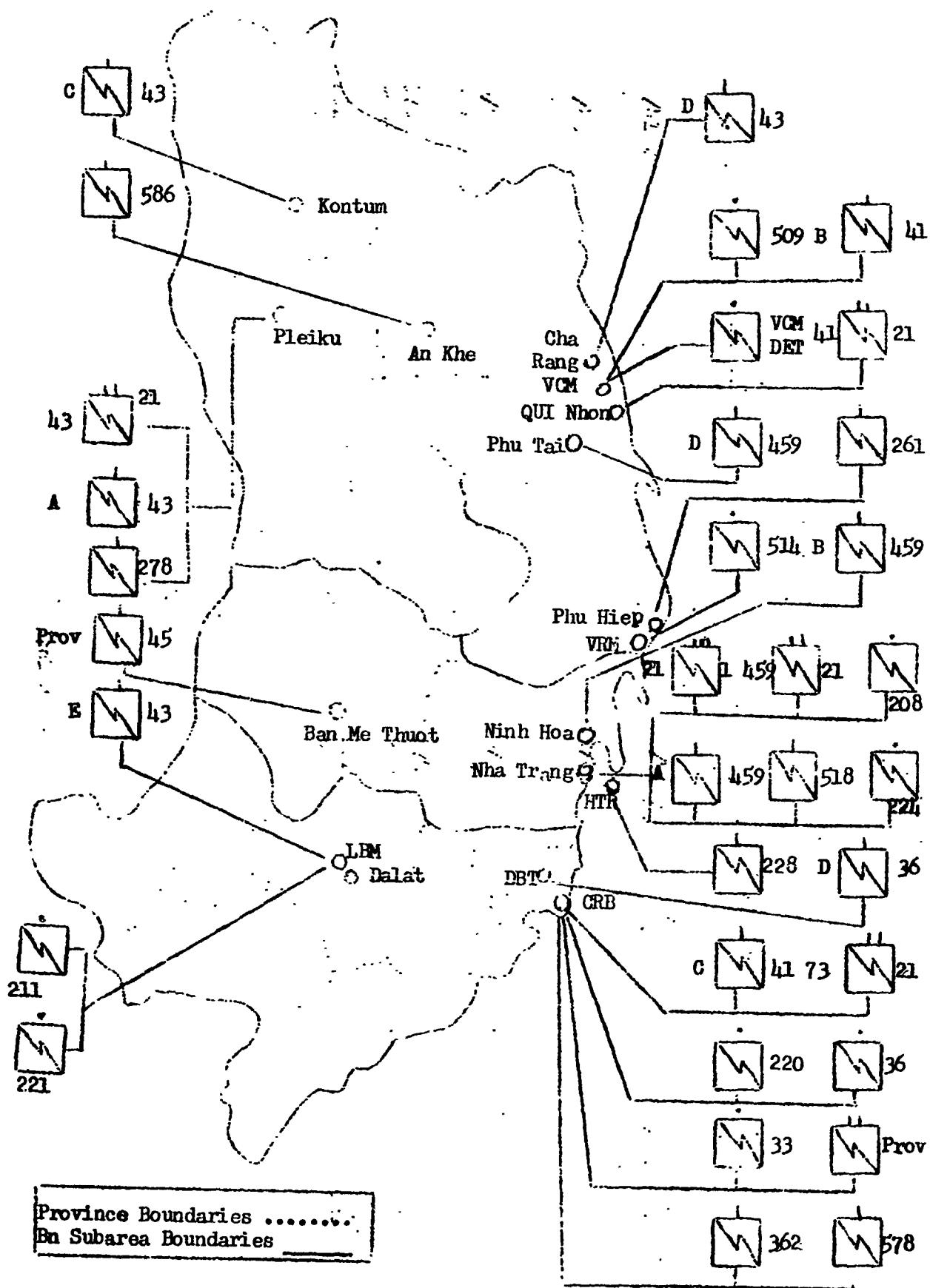
TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed.

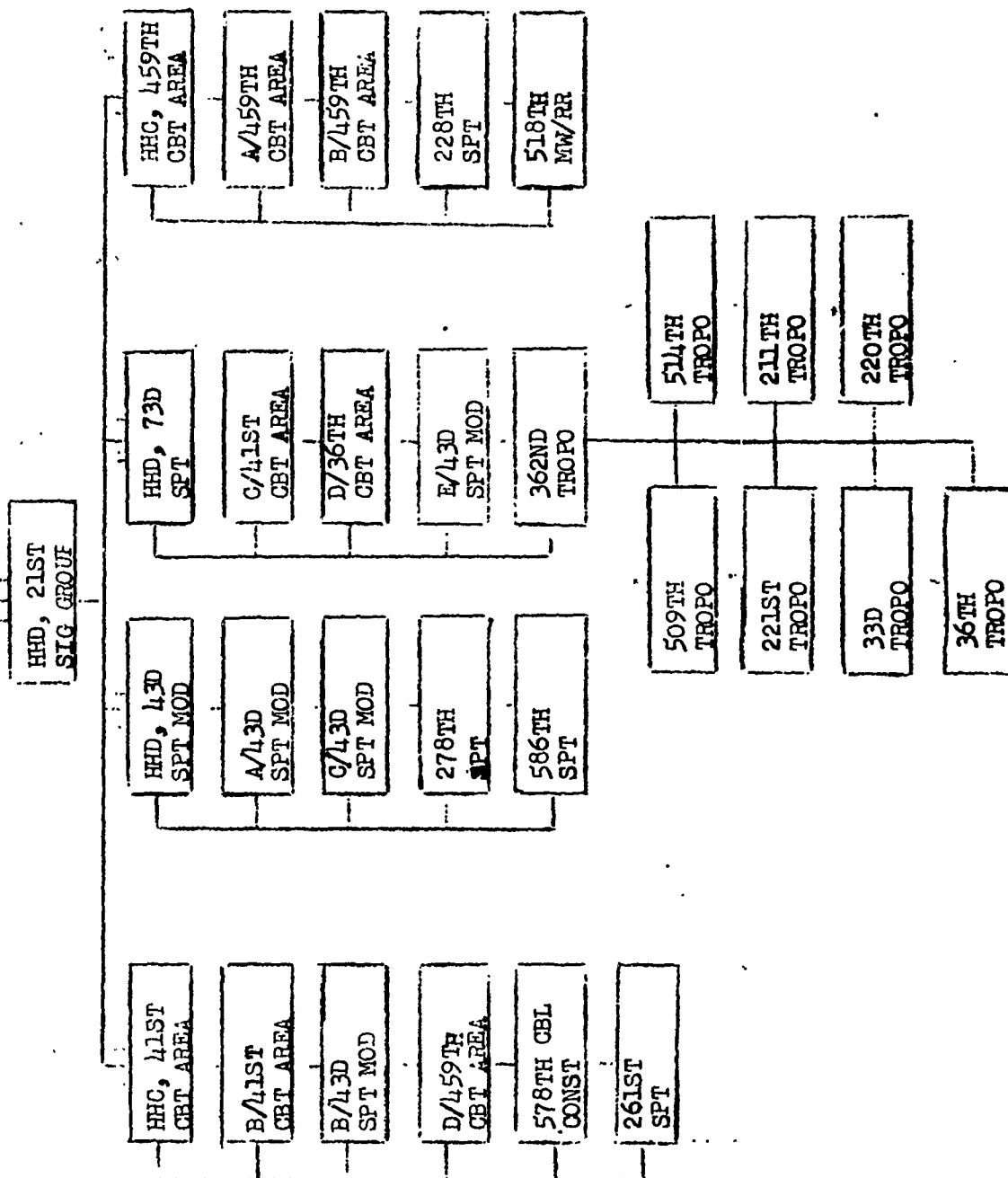
FOR THE COMMANDER:

*for* *J. G. Polston*  
J. G. POLSTON  
Maj, MG  
Asst ASJ Gen

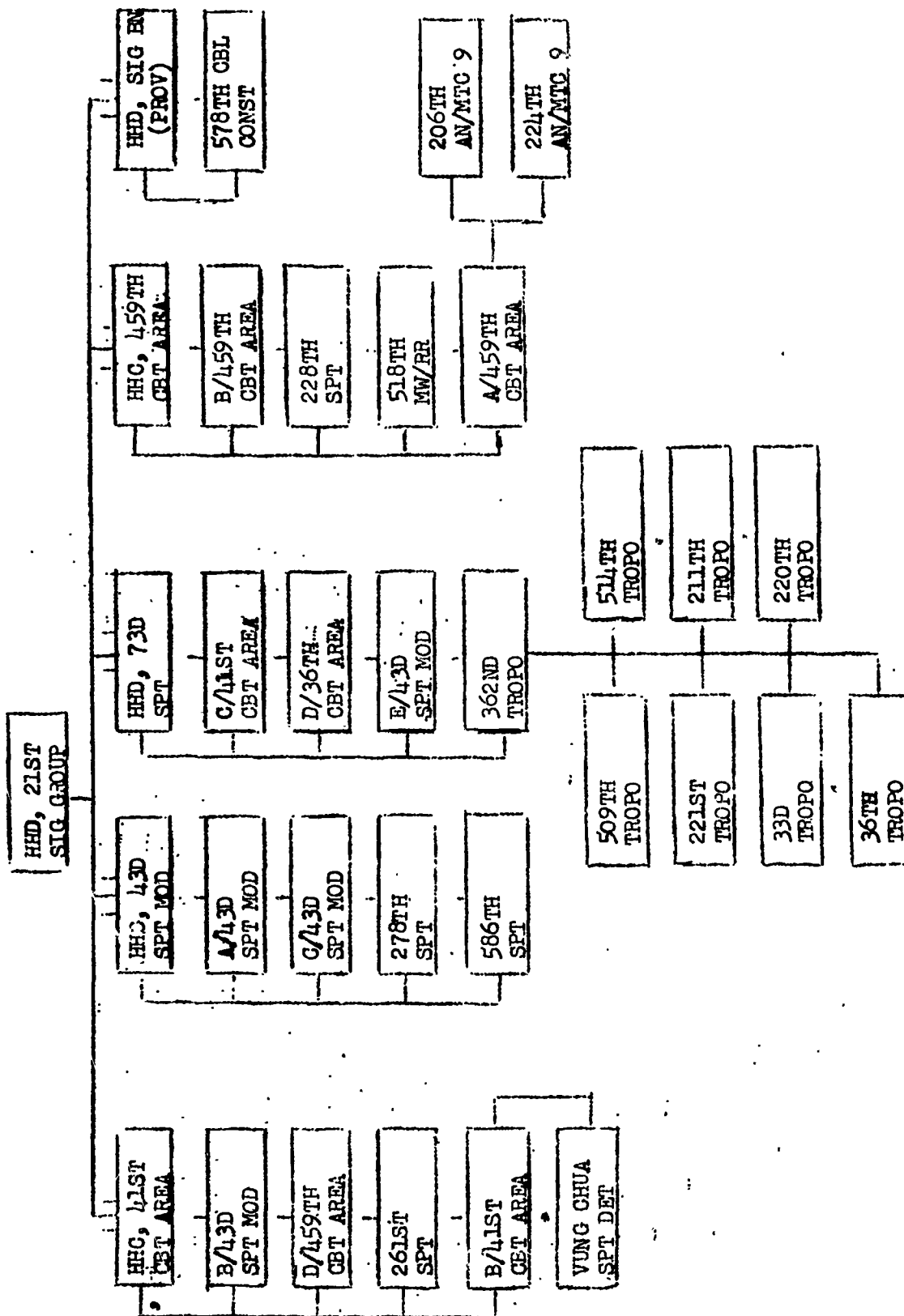




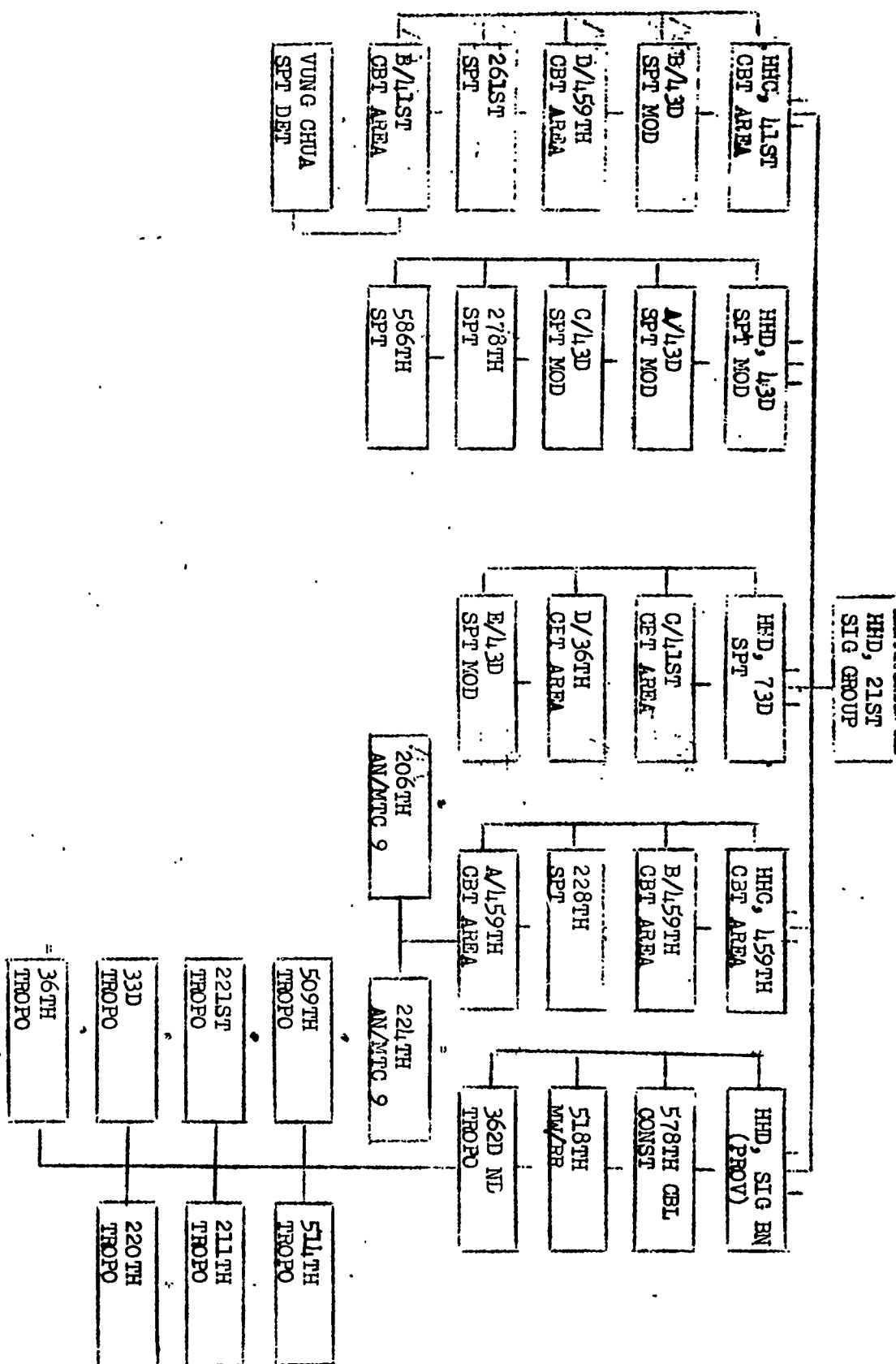
21ST SIGNAL GROUP  
31 July 1969



21 ST SIGNAL GROUP  
31 OCTOBER 1969



# 21 ST SIGNAL GROUP (1 MODIFIED)



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Operational Report - Lessons Learned, HQ, 21st Signal Group		
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CO, 21st Signal Group		
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